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GIFFEN / DIKSHER
THE NEW
THERE'S NO STOPPING US NOW.
SUPERMAN

THREE WEEKS AGO:
FWEET! FWEET! FWEET!
BLAST! DIDN'T EXPECT THEM TO FIND ME MISSING SO SOON! I THOUGHT I'D BE OUT OF SIGHT BEFORE THEY BLEW THE WHISTLE--
--WHERE IT'D BE HOURS BEFORE THEY THOUGHT TO LOOK FOR ME!
NO SUCH LUCK NOW!
I'LL BE LUCKY TO EVEN MAKE IT THERE, AND IT'LL TAKE A MIRACLE TO GET ME OUTTA HERE...
...BUT THEN, AFTER 22 YEARS IN THIS JOINT, MAYBE I'M DUE ONE OF THEM ABOUT NOW!
THEY ALMOST HAD THAT DRAINAGE SYSTEM OUT TO THE RIVER FINISHED BEFORE THE E.P.A. PUT THE KIBOSH ON THAT IDEA...
...BUT WITH ALL THEM LIGHTS, I CAN'T GET TO IT!
"MAN, WHERE'S LADY LUCK WHEN YOU NEED HER...?"
YIPES! ALERT THE OTHER GUARDS-- I JUST LOST MY LIGHT!
POP!
HUH? LIGHTS OUT... GOTTA WORK FAST!
BEEN LOOSENING THESE BOLTS ONE TURN A DAY FOR A MONTH...

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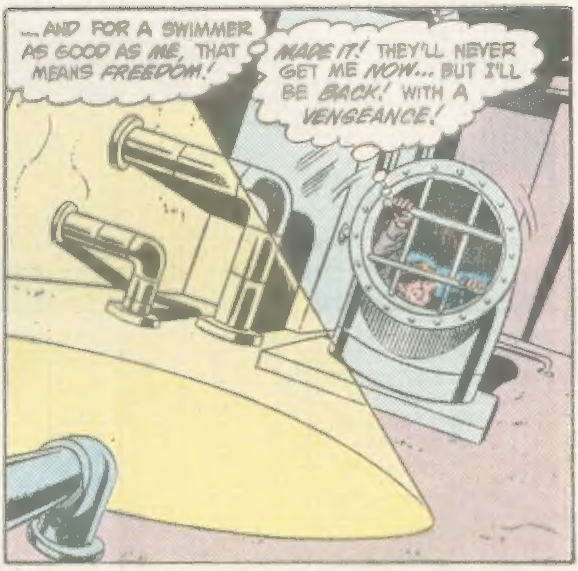
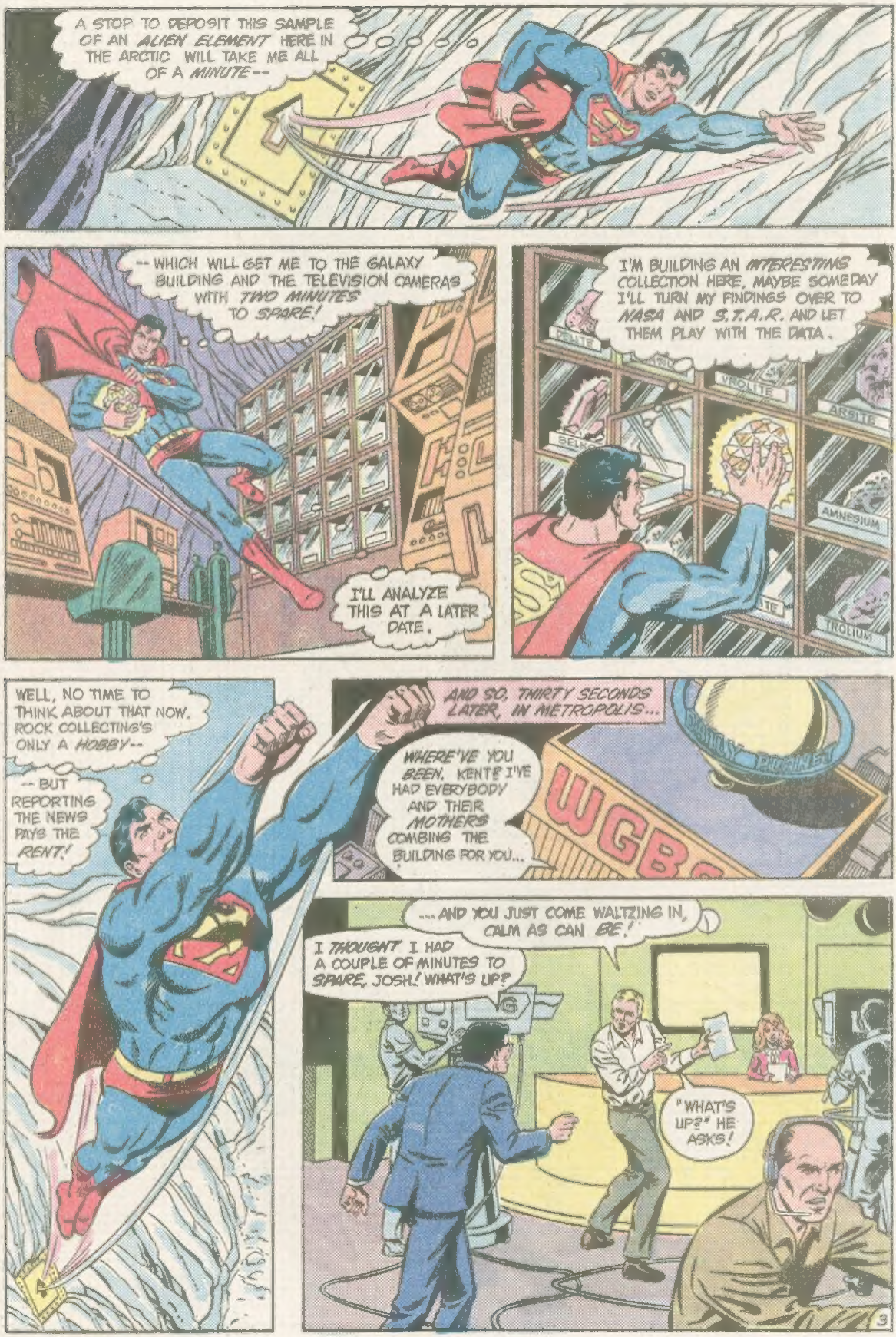
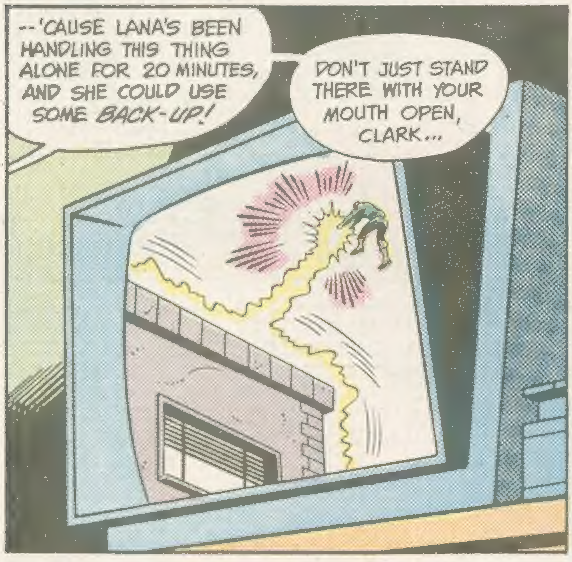


SUPERMAN
TODAY:
THERE'S NOT MUCH IN THE WAY OF LIFE THIS FAR NORTH, IT'S JUST SO MUCH ICE AND SNOW AND FOUL WEATHER.
THAT'S WHY ME LONG AGO CHOSE THIS PLACE, AN ISOLATED HOME AWAY FROM HOME... THE APTLY NAMED FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE!
JUST ENOUGH TIME FOR A QUICK SIDE-TRIP BEFORE HEADING IN TO METROPOLIS.
I MAY BE PRESSED FOR TIME, BUT MY LITTLE PACKAGE ISN'T THE KIND OF THING I'D WANT TO LEAVE LYING AROUND CLARK KENT'S OFFICE!
"MEET JOHN DOE!"

PAUL KUPPERBERG *writer*	ALEX SAVIUK *penciller*	DAVE HUNT *inker*	BEN ODA *letterer*	GENE D'ANGELO *colorist*	JULIUS SCHWARTZ *editor*


A STOP TO DEPOSIT THIS SAMPLE OF AN ALIEN ELEMENT HERE IN THE ARCTIC WILL TAKE ME ALL OF A MINUTE--
-- WHICH WILL GET ME TO THE GALAXY BUILDING AND THE TELEVISION CAMERAS WITH TWO MINUTES TO SPARE!
I'LL ANALYZE THIS AT A LATER DATE.
I'M BUILDING AN INTERESTING COLLECTION HERE, MAYBE SOMEDAY I'LL TURN MY FINDINGS OVER TO NASA AND S.T.A.R. AND LET THEM PLAY WITH THE DATA.
AMNESIUM
TROLIUM
WELL, NO TIME TO THINK ABOUT THAT NOW. ROCK COLLECTING'S ONLY A HOBBY--
-- BUT REPORTING THE NEWS PAYS THE RENT!
AND SO, THIRTY SECONDS LATER, IN METROPOLIS...
WHERE'VE YOU BEEN, KENT? I'VE HAD EVERYBODY AND THEIR MOTHERS COMBING THE BUILDING FOR YOU...
WGB
...AND YOU JUST COME WALTZING IN, CALM AS CAN BE!
I THOUGHT I HAD A COUPLE OF MINUTES TO SPARE, JOSH! WHAT'S UP?
"WHAT'S UP?" HE ASKS!

--BUT DID I GET A SURRENDER? UH-UH! INSTEAD, THEY SEND ME THIS, FROM THE POLICE HEADQUARTERS!
GREAT SCOTT!
YOU'RE A MASTER OF THE UNDERSTATEMENT... BUT I WISH YOU'D DO IT ON CAMERA--

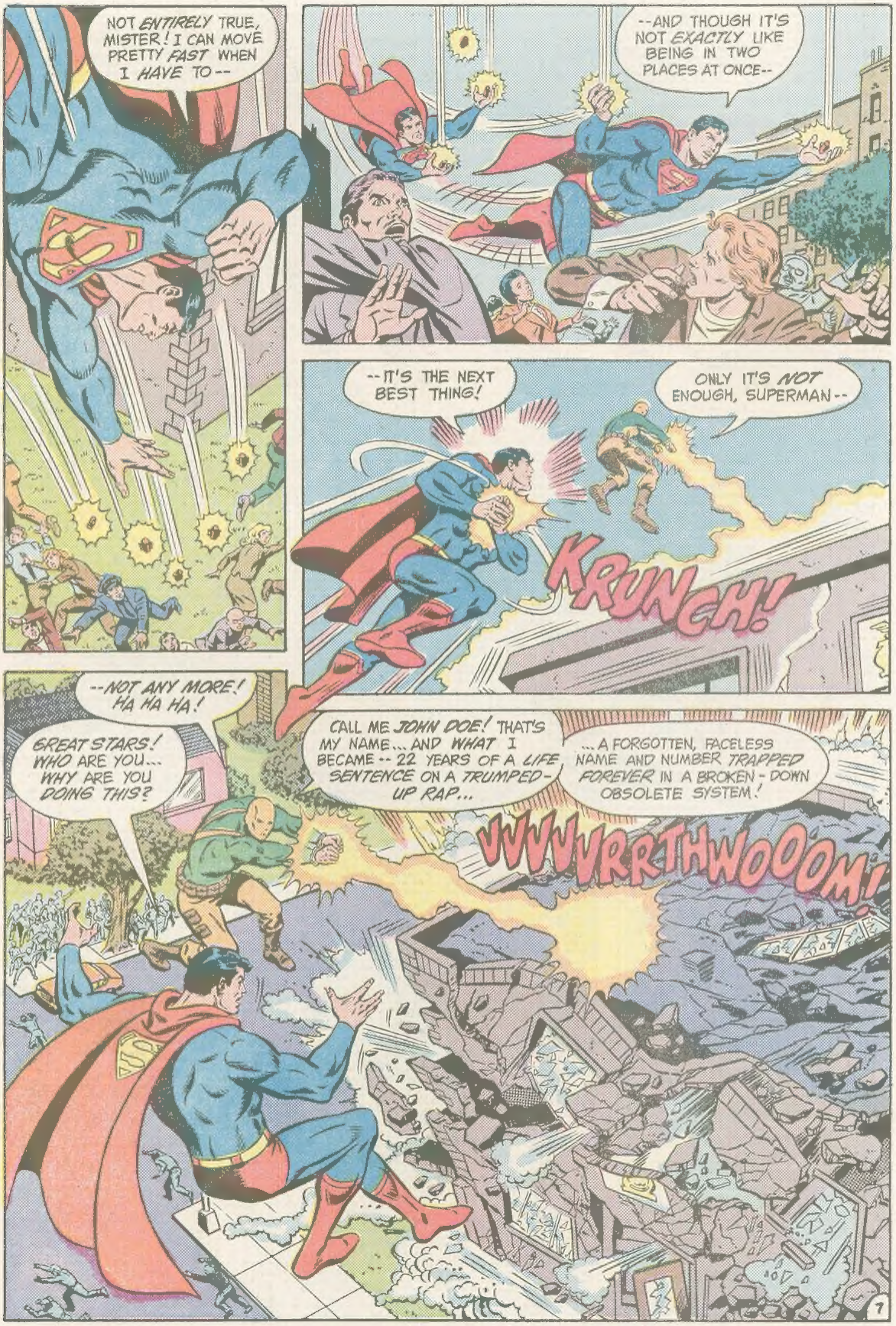

--'CAUSE LANA'S BEEN HANDLING THIS THING ALONE FOR 20 MINUTES, AND SHE COULD USE SOME BACK-UP!
DON'T JUST STAND THERE WITH YOUR MOUTH OPEN, CLARK...

--IF BENEATH HIS CLOTHES HE WEARS THE GARB OF SUPERMAN!
I'VE ALREADY TAKEN A SUPER-VISION CLOSE-UP LOOK--
--AT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN CARROLL COUNTY--
--AND AS MUCH AS JOSH COYLE MAY NEED CLARK KENT--
4

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

UGBS
--THE FOLKS OVER IN SUBURBIA NEED SUPERMAN MORE!
FAR FASTER THAN A SPEEDING BULLET--FASTER EVEN THAN SOUND, THE MAN OF STEEL FLIES WEST...
... WHILE, BUT SECONDS AHEAD OF HIM, AT HIS DESTINATION...
ALL RIGHT, MISTER! YOU'VE GOT TO THE COUNT OF FIVE TO LAND... OR WE'RE OPENING FIRE!
IF THE MYSTERIOUS FIGURE ABOVE HEARS THE OFFICER'S WARNING, HE IGNORES IT.
HE'S GOT OTHER THINGS ON HIS MIND!
THIS'S TAKING LONGER THAN I THOUGHT IT WOULD! THE VIBRATIONS SHOULD'VE BUILT UP BY NOW...
...SHAKING THAT BLASTED BUILDING TO ITS FOUNDATION!
FIVE... FOUR...
...THREE... TWO...
THERE--IT'S STARTING! THIS IS WHERE THEY FIRST BROUGHT ME WHEN I WAS BUSTED--
--SO THIS IS WHERE I START PAYING THEM BACK FOR 22 YEARS IN THE SLAMMER... NUMBER ONE IN A SERIES OF THREE!
PARDON ME--?
5

IS THIS A PRIVATE GAME, OR CAN ANYONE PLAY?
SUPERMAN! I... I WASN'T EXPECTING YOU!
I WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THE WORD HAD GOTTEN AROUND ON THAT SUBJECT BY NOW --
-- BUT NO BIG DEAL! I CAN EXPLAIN IT ALL AT ONCE! YOU'RE-- UGH!
VVVHAAM!
DON'T COUNT ON IT, SUPERMAN! THIS PLAN'S ALL THAT KEPT ME GOIN' THE LAST FEW YEARS...
...AND YOU AIN'T GONNA RUIN IT FOR ME! NO WAY!
FWAM
CAUGHT ME BY SURPRISE! HE'S USING SOME SORT OF HIGH-INTENSITY VIBRATION DEVICE...
...AND WHILE IT MAY MAKE THINGS MOMENTARILY UNCOMFORTABLE FOR ME --
--IT'S NOT NEAR ENOUGH TO REALLY BOTHER ME!
YOU'RE FAST, SUPERMAN--
-- BUT EVEN YOU CAN'T BE IN TWO PLACES AT ONCE...
...ONE, SAVING POLICE HEADQUARTERS -- AND THE OTHER, KEEPING THOSE EXPLOSIVE CHARGES FROM HITTING THE PEOPLE BELOW!
GREAT KRYPTON!


NOT ENTIRELY TRUE, MISTER! I CAN MOVE PRETTY FAST WHEN I HAVE TO--
--AND THOUGH IT'S NOT EXACTLY LIKE BEING IN TWO PLACES AT ONCE--
--IT'S THE NEXT BEST THING!
ONLY IT'S NOT ENOUGH, SUPERMAN--
KRUNCH!
--NOT ANY MORE! HA HA HA!
GREAT STARS! WHO ARE YOU... WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?
CALL ME JOHN DOE! THAT'S MY NAME... AND WHAT I BECAME -- 22 YEARS OF A LIFE SENTENCE ON A TRUMPED-UP RAP...
...A FORGOTTEN, FACELESS NAME AND NUMBER TRAPPED FOREVER IN A BROKEN-DOWN OBSOLETE SYSTEM!
VVVVRRTHWOOOM!

BETTER GET USED TO THAT SYSTEM, DOE, BECAUSE YOU'RE GOING RIGHT BACK INTO IT!
THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK! I'VE GOT TOO MUCH TO DO TO LET MYSELF BE TAKEN AGAIN --
--NO MATTER WHAT I HAVE TO DO TO PROVE IT!
SORRY TO DISAPPOINT YOU, BUT I... HUH?
WH-WHAT AM I DOING UP HERE?!
DON'T YOU KNOW?
FLYING!?-- I... I WAS FLYING... BUT NOW I'VE... FORGOTTEN HOW!
MEMORY'S SLIPPING, HUH, SUPERMAN?
THAT'S WHAT YOU GET FOR TANGLING WITH ME! BETTER WATCH YOURSELF...
...'CAUSE YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN IT'LL HAPPEN AGAIN! HA HA!
FHWAAM!
OOOOOFF! THAT LANDING... DIDN'T HURT--?
OF COURSE IT DIDN'T! I'M INVULNERABLE!
EXCEPT I FORGOT THAT WHILE I WAS FALLING! JUST LIKE I DON'T REMEMBER HOW I GOT UP THERE IN THE FIRST PLACE!
HE'S ESCAPING, SUPERMAN! AREN'T YOU GOING AFTER HIM?
I'D BE HAPPY TO, CAPTAIN...
...BUT HOW?
HOW--? HOW--?!
8

YOU'RE SUPERMAN, AREN'T YOU?
OF COURSE I AM!
THEN FLY AFTER HIM!
ER... I CAN FLY?!
WHY, SURE! OF COURSE I CAN FLY! I'VE BEEN DOING IT ALL MY LIFE!
IS SOMETHING WRONG, SUPERMAN?
SNAP!
NOT ANY MORE, CAPTAIN! I REMEMBER EVERYTHING NOW!
BUT WHAT BROUGHT ON MY AMNESIA IN THE FIRST PLACE? JOHN DOE CLAIMED IT WAS HIS DOING...
...AND THAT IT WOULD HAPPEN AGAIN AT ANY TIME! THIS IS TROUBLE I DON'T NEED!
BUT I'VE GOT IT ANYWAY! WHAT I DON'T HAVE IS JOHN DOE! BUT HE'LL BE BACK...
"...HE SAID HE'S GOT THINGS TO DO... AND I'LL BET I'M NOT GOING TO LIKE ANY OF THEM!"
I'M TELLING YOU, I NEED SOMETHING BETTER THAN WHAT I GOT, MONITOR--
--BECAUSE THAT VIBRATION GIMMICK TOOK TOO LONG TO DO ITS JOB!
CERTAINLY, MR. DOE, AFTER ALL, DIDN'T I PROVIDE YOU WITH A CONTACT TO PROVIDE YOUR COSTUME AND... ACCESSORIES?
9

BUT I'M CONCERNED MR DOE, ABOUT PAYMENT FOR SERVICES! YOU'D BE INCARCERATED FOR TWO DECADES!
I BURIED MY MONEY BEFORE I WENT INTO PRISON AND HAVE PLENTY LEFT FOR THE RIGHT GIMMICK!
THEN THAT IS PRECISELY WHAT I SHALL ALLOCATE FOR YOU MR. DOE. I WILL BE IN TOUCH BY THE EVENING!
MEANWHILE THOUSANDS OF MILES BELOW
DAILY PLANET
I'M GLAD YOU'LL BE DOING THE SERIES FOR THE PLANET CLARK!
IT NEEDS THE HUMAN TOUCH I SUPPOSE YOU MISS REAL REPORTING BEING THERE IN TELEVISIONLAND!
TV NEWS IS REAL REPORTING, PERRY... MOST OF THE TIME ANYWAY.
YOU'VE BEEN WANTED ME TO REMIND YOU OF YOUR WIFE'S BIRTHDAY TOMORROW
SHOULD I RUN OUT AND PICK UP A GIFT FOR HER LIKE I USUALLY DO?
I WOULDN'T WANT TO MISS HER BIRTHDAY... ESPECIALLY NOW.
AND THIS YEAR, I'LL DO MY OWN SHOPPING! THANKS ANYWAY, SALLY!
OH, CERTAINLY, MR. WHITE!
10

YOU KNOW, MAYBE IF I'D DONE THIS ALL ALONG, ALICE AND I WOULDN'T HAVE HAD THOSE PROBLEMS.
IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO CHANGE, PERRY. I'M SURE ALICE WILL APPRECIATE IT.
LET'S JUST HOPE IT'S NOT A CASE OF TOO LITTLE TOO LATE!
POOR PERRY...
.. HE'S BEEN A WRECK SINCE HIS SEPARATION. I WISH THERE WAS SOMETHING I... I...
...I WHAT?!
WH-WHAT AM I DOING HERE, IN THESE CLOTHES? LAST THING I REMEMBER IS FIGHTING JOHN DOE!
SLAM!
THIS IS RIDICULOUS! I'M SUPERMAN! WHY AM I HIDING BEHIND THIS CIVILIAN GET-UP?
I HAVE TO GO AFTER DOE!
WISH I COULD REMEMBER WHY I WAS WEARING THOSE CLOTHES! OH WELL, IT'LL COME BACK TO ME, I HOPE --
--AFTER JOHN DOE IS IN CUSTODY!
WHOOSH

LATER THAT EVENING IN DOWNTOWN METROPOLIS
--KNOWING ALL THE TIME JUSTICE WAS A FARCE! YES... I DID MURDER A MAN... BUT IN SELF-DEFENSE..
...ONLY THEY WOULDN'T BELIEVE ME... OR ABOUT THREE OTHERS I HAD TO KILL!
JUSTICE?-- A LIE!
THWAKABOOM
I'LL SHOW THEM JUSTICE! THE SAME AND THEY SHUDDER OUT TO ME!
JOHN JOE'S LAUGHTER IS SMOTHERED BY THE CASH OF EXPLOSIVES "HA" POWER BEAM'S THROUGH THE DESERTED STREETS OF THE CITY.
DESTRUCTIVE! HA HA HA HA!
THABHOOM!

EXPLOSIONS!--EXACTLY THE SORT OF THING SUPERMAN'S BEEN WAITING FOR!
THEY'RE COMING FROM THE NANCIAL AND LEGAL DISTRICT!
IF I'M RIGHT ABOUT DOE'S MOTIVES--
--I SHOULD FIND HIM HERE!
DOE! HOLD IT! THERE'S A MATTER OF MEMORY I WANT TO TALK ABOUT!
SUPERMAN! YOU'VE COME TO THE WRONG PLACE FOR HELP--
--IN FACT, THIS IS THE WRONG PLACE FOR ANYTHING... EXCEPT GETTING KILLED!
MIGHT AS WELL SAVE IT, DOE! THESE BLASTS DON'T EVEN FAZE ME!
KABOOM!
BLAMM!
THWAM!
THEY'RE... JUST... A... A... GREAT KRYPTON!
WH-WHAT AM I DOING?! THESE BLASTS COULD KILL ME!
TURNING CHICKEN, SUPERMAN?
BLAM!
I MUST'VE BEEN INSANE TO FLY INTO THAT! GOT TO GET AWAY!
KEEP GOING, SUPERMAN! I'VE GOT JUST ONE MORE ITEM ON MY LIST--
--AND I DON'T WANNA SEE YOU THERE... OR ELSE!
I CAN'T GET NEAR JOHN DOE WHILE HE'S GOT THOSE BLASTERS!
BOOM!
RIP ON MYSELF TO DISARM HIM SOMEHOW MAYBE...

Memorandum
To: Julie
From: Elliot
RE: SUPERMAN

Start to finish, this book has been an ambitious project. I suppose you could date its beginnings from sometime in 1976, when Cary Bates and I collaborated on the script of **SUPERMAN** #300. That was a speculative story on future history, as this is, but this expands the scope of that speculation.

"I want to get all sorts of artists in on this," Julie Schwartz growled. Julie does not talk; he growls. He growled that he wanted artists who had never done a Superman story before, who could reinterpret Superman according to their own peculiar styles. "Joe Orlando," he said, and I said now he'd be great, and he's just down the hall. "Jack Kirby," he said, and I said really? You really think we can get him to do something? "Frank Miller, Will Eisner, Berni Wrightson, Terry Austin, Marshall Rogers, Wendy Pini, Howard Chaykin, Al Williamson, Mike Kaluta, Klaus Janson, Moebius, John Byrne, Jack Davis, Leonard Starr, Brian Bolland, Walt Simonson, Mike Grell, Steve Ditko, Jerry Robinson, Bill Sienkiewicz—plus a literary salute from Ray Bradbury," he said, and I started thinking the old bugger's brain was getting buggy. "Steranko," Julie said, and I laughed. Now I knew he was [illegible]

Never underestimate the moral power of a megalomaniacal editor with forty years of experience behind him at badgering, buttering, and blowing off steam. Never underestimate the emotional power of the greatest fantasy legend the American culture has yet produced.

Julie, with some help from the talent coordinator, Sal Amendola, got them. From the far corners of the Earth, artists of dizzying stature flocked to add to their portfolios a contribution to the [illegible] going myth of Superman and—perhaps equally impressive in the professional world in which they live [illegible] illustrate one of the story sequences found the time to do a pin-up page. Those who couldn't do a long story had their obliging writer supply an installment of suitable length. My old buddy Howard Chaykin offered a breathtaking cover painting. Steranko got so caught up in the fictional premise that he took it in his own hands to extend it further, adding speculation as to the twenty-first century disappearance of Superman to which I alluded.

This is a story I have wanted to tell for a long time. As a history buff I have often mused on the changes, over the years, in the way we view our own past. "Let history be the judge," our leaders often say, not noticing that history does not judge with one voice. Judgments and evaluations of the great ones among us change as surely as the fortunes of living men and women rise and fall and rise again. So does the historic attitude toward Superman change and flow as life flows, in the storytelling, from the hands of one writer to another, among the pens and brushes of many artists. That is the story I have hoped to bring to you, showing the very changes the story talks about, through the changing hands of the artists through whose visions my words pass.

It is a rare opportunity for a writer to work with so many of such towering talent. I hope you find my words worthy of their storytelling.

Elliot S. Maggin
New Hampshire
February 1984

Thanks, Elliot.

When Julie Schwartz first outlined his plans for **SUPERMAN** #400 to me, I was both pleased and disappointed. Pleased because I've always liked the idea of a "jam" (the use of many artists and/or writers on one issue) on an [illegible] more special, somehow, and besides, there's less chance of having deadline problems if there are more people at [illegible]k on the same (usually much [illegible] book. At the same time, I felt a twinge of disappointment because I realized that I could not take part, artistically, in the celebration. I had simply done too much Superman art to be able to draw even a pin-up page under Julie's ground rules. Oh, well...

When Julie showed me a list of the people he intended to ask to make a contribution to this very special Superman issue, I said, "You're crazy, Julie! You'll **never** get all those guys to say yes." Clearly, Julie wasn't in awe of some of the biggest names in the business. He saw no reason why they should be less enthusiastic than he was about an event of this magnitude and set out to prove it by didn't **know** that you were on a fool's errand, you weren't.

The days drifted by and Julie wore out a path to my door bearing news of this or that artist's acceptance. I couldn't believe it. He was actually getting some very busy, very talented folk to commit a block of time to help celebrate Superman's 400th anniversary.

And boy, did they deliver. The beaten path to my door became a rut as Julie brought the pages in to me, one by one. Flushed with success, he would stop people in the hall with a "willya look at **this** one!" No one missed the twinkle in his eye as page by page his dream became reality. He looked, I swear, like a proud papa.

Good show, Julius!

And I promise it'll be a good show for all of you out there in television land. **SUPERMAN** #400 will be on sale July 12th (64 pages, $1.50, $2.00 in Canada, Mando paper) both on newsstands and in specialty shops across the country. Even if you're not a Superman fanatic, this is one for your collection. This group of talented artists probably will never be published between the same covers again. Be there, hear!

More

We have another goodie for you! Also on this year's October schedule is **The Superman #400 Portfolio.** These portfolios will be available in stores serviced by specialty stores' distribution channels. The portfolio will have a full-color, painted cover by **Howard Chaykin** and will contain 15 black-and-white plates by Terry Austin, Brian Bolland, John Byrne, Jack Davis, Steve Ditko, Will Eisner, Mike Grell, Jack Kirby, Frank Miller, Moebius, Jerry Robinson, Bill Sienkiewicz, Walter Simonson, Steranko, and Berni Wrightson. Look for it around June 26th. On good stock it'll be available for $10.00 in the U.S.A., and $16.00 in Canada.

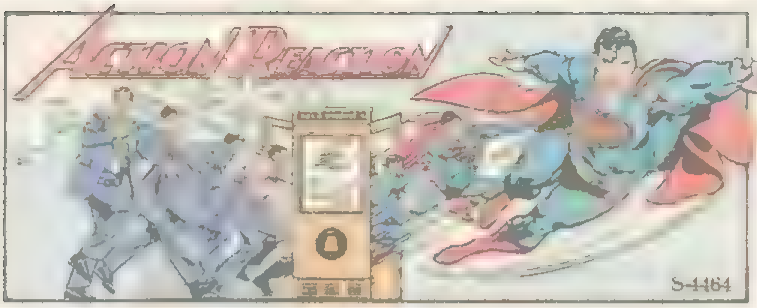
Thank you and Good Afternoon

Dick

GOT YOUR NERVE BACK, HUH, SUPERMAN? DON'T YOU KNOW THESE BLASTS CAN... HA HA HA!... HURT YOU?
THAT THOUGHT'S CROSSED MY MIND, DOE--
THOOM!
--SO I DECIDED I'D BETTER PUT A STOP TO THEM!
WITH UNBELIEVABLE ACCURACY, THE HEAVY METAL MANHOLE COVER CHIPS THROUGH THE AIR--
KRAK!
MY CLOTHES -- RUINED! BLAST YOU, SUPERMAN! BLAST YOU!
HE'S GETTING AWAY! I'VE GOT TO STOP HIM! BUT WHAT'S IT TO ME? I DON'T EVEN KNOW THE GUY!
WHAT'S WITH THIS COSTUME, ANYWAY? IF ANYONE SAW CLARK KENT PARADING AROUND LIKE THIS HE'D THINK I WAS NUTS!
WHEW! I'M GLAD I'VE GOT MY HEAD TOGETHER
WAIT! I'M CLARK KENT... BUT I'M ALSO SUPERMAN! I WASN'T IN ANY DANGER BACK THERE BECAUSE I'M INVULNERABLE!
THESE MEMORY LOSSES ARE GETTING WORSE... LASTING LONGER!
HOW IN THE NAME OF KRYPTON DOES JOHN DOE DO IT TO ME?
14

THE NEXT MORNING, IN UPSTATE METROPOLIS...
THE COURTHOUSE... WAIT, IT'S NOT THE PRISON!
SMASHING THIS JOINT IS WHAT I'VE REALLY BEEN WAITING FOR!
THIS FINAL GIMMICK I GOT BETTER WORK-- AH!
ZZZT!
IT'S WORKING AS ADVERTISED... DESTROYING THE MOLECULAR COHESION OF THE WALL!
FIRST THING FIRST! GOTTA LET THE PRISONERS FREE OR ELSE THEY'LL BE DISINTEGRATED LIKE THE PRISON!
REAL THOUGHTFUL OF YOU JOE--
--BUT I DON'T THINK YOU HAVE TO BOTHER! BESIDES YOU WON'T THANK FOR COMPANY ONCE YOU'RE BACK INSIDE!
DON'T YOU EVER LEARN, SUPERMAN? I BEAT YOU TWICE...
... AND THIRD TIME'S THE CHARM!
I KNOW. I'M FEELING LUCKY!
I SUDDENLY REMEMBERED READING ABOUT YOUR ESCAPE-- AND AFTER YOU WENT FOR THE POLICE HEADQUARTERS AND THEN THE COURTHOUSE!
ZZZT!
--YOU PLANTED A SIGNPOST POINTING OUT YOUR MOTIVE! I KNEW IT WAS JUST A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE YOU HIT HERE!
NO! STOP!
YOU WON'T BE NEEDING THESE ANY MORE
KRANK!
YOU WON'T GET IT, MAN! YOU'VE GOT ME... BUT YOU WON'T MAKE ME TELL YOU ANYTHING!
15

YOU'RE STUCK WITH WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU... FOR GOOD!
MAYBE... TOO BAD IT'S NOT AFFECTING ME...
...AT THE MOMENT! BUT IF DOE WON'T TALK, I AM STUCK!
WELCOME HOME, JOHN DOE!
THANKS, SUPERMAN!
WHAT'S CAUSING THOSE BLACKOUTS? HOW... HUH?!
OF COURSE! I SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT OF THIS SOONER!
I'D BETTER MOVE FAST... BEFORE I FORGET THAT I'M ON MY WAY TO--
"--THE FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE!"
TROUBLE WAS, I BELIEVED DOE WHEN HE BOASTED HE WAS THE CAUSE OF MY BOUTS OF AMNESIA--
--AND NEVER GAVE A SECOND THOUGHT TO THE FACT THAT I'D JUST BEEN IN CONTACT WITH AN ALIEN SUBSTANCE!
AMNESIUM
NOW I SEE THAT MY HANDS ARE GLOWING JUST LIKE THE SPECIMEN ...MEANING I ABSORBED SOME SORT OF STRANGE RADIATION--
--AND, JUST AS I SUSPECTED, THERE'S A HAIRLINE CRACK IN THE CASE HOLDING THE AMNESIUM ...ANOTHER ALIEN ELEMENT--
ELEMENT-X
AMNESIUM
--ONE WHOSE RADIATION INDUCES LOSS OF MEMORY! NORMALLY I'M IMMUNE TO ITS EFFECT--
--BUT TEAMED WITH ELEMENT-X'S RADIATION, IT'S HAVING PROGRESSIVELY WORSE EFFECTS ON ME!
UH-OH... I'M STARTING TO FORGET HOW TO GET HOME TO METROPOLIS FROM HERE! I'D BETTER START TO DECONTAMINATE MYSELF... FAST!
NEXT ISSUE: "THE GREAT TOYMAN TRIVIA CONTEST!" -AND- "THE PAST AND FUTURE SUPERMAN!" --ART BY WAYNE BORING!



DC Comics Inc.
666 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10103

Dear [illegible]

"Endings" was certainly one of the finest *SUPERMAN* tales ever told. The agony and torment radiated off the printed page. Lois was warning of her former lover who typical of anyone who has fallen out of love and may have some regrets. The people of Metropolis seemed to conveniently forget the great good that *Superman* has done in the past and quickly condemned our hero for being all-too-human and making some mistakes. This issue really highlighted Lana as the beautiful, caring woman that she is. She understands both Clark and *Superman* better than I ever did. I deeply hope that Clark and Lana will stay together. Their relationship seems, was meant to be. Again, thank you for a truly outstanding story. It's easy to understand why Superman is and always will be an inspiration to all of us.

FRED DE BOOM
9372 Tidewater Circle
Huntington Beach, CA 92646

Only one page for letters—and we got plenty of them—so, onward—BR

*****

Dear Editor

All too often I find myself taking comic books for granted. Then a heartwarming story like *ACTION* #556 will come along and I will realize how special comic books truly are. The first superfeat of the story was its cover. The expression of hurt or [illegible] I draw that [illegible] pencil and paper is [illegible] cence! During the story I also felt much despair for the Man of Steel and the torment he was going through. The build-up of the Vandal Savage plot against Superman carried through every part [illegible] satisfying conclusion.

JEFF MITCHELL
Rte. L, Box 154
Rush City, MN 55069

*****

Dear Editor,

Thank you! For four years, while I sailed from Michigan on a thirty-foot boat, went to six different schools, went through my parents' divorce and my dad's second wedding and went off to school all alone, DC comics (especially *ACTION*) has been a break from life. I've watched as *Superman* flies from the arctic to the tropics, changes jobs (from the Planet to WGBS,) "divorces" Lois Lane, starts to see Lana as Clark, and battles the toughest foe of all, Vandal Savage.

Without DC, I don't know how I could have made it.

I've often wanted to comment on stories, but never so much as I want to talk (or write) about *ACTION* #556.

The cover didn't shock me (hasn't this sort of thing happened to Supes before"), but as I opened it and started to read, I got more and more excited.

Pages 1-6 were mostly re-run but with a very striking background. I knew for sure that page 7 was it. After months of veiling, Vandal Savage was finally going to spring on *Superman*! And as if that wasn't enough [illegible] Clark and Lana on page 8 and [illegible] wonder. I [illegible] me bouncing in my seat! Please, please [illegible] her! If *Superman 2020* is to happen, you have to!!

After Lana's speech on page 7, I knew she didn't suspect Clark of being *Supes*, but her actions on page 8 (making a much-needed excuse for Clark to disappear) has me still wondering.

As I continued to page through, the tensions built and I saw more and more of the inside of Kal-El on pages 18-19 than I have in the past five issues put together.

But then...page 20: THE SHOWDOWN. Oh, boy!

By page 22, I was shaking so much I could hardly hold the magazine! Still [illegible] and I began to get the [illegible] not another month to wait. Then I turned the page and got [illegible] ending [illegible]

What's up with it, anyway? You guys build up this delicious suspense and end it in four frames with *Superman* saying, "Ha, Ha, Nanny, nanny boo boo" with his hands on his hips. I was truly disappointed. You can do better than this! You set it up over months and months and then end it all in one issue? This is one time I wish the story had spanned several issues.

DAVID J. DEWEY
Interlochen Arts Academy
Interlochen, MI 49643

*****

Dear ACTION people,

ACTION COMICS #556 was magnificent! It was well written and fun reading. I really had a good time with this issue.

Vandal Savage might think he's omniscient, but wrong he is/was. He might be immortal but he's human and humans aren't perfect. Everyone makes mistakes, even immortal humans.

Thanks for one of the best issues ever. DC is number one!

SANTIAGO FERNANDEZ
828 Selkirk S.
West Palm Beach, FL 3340-

*****

Dear Sir:

Reading the *SUPERMAN* stories over the past dozen issues has left me with a certain dissatisfaction, as if something were missing. It's always been a very vague thing till *ACTION* #556 brought it out clearly. *Superman* said it himself on page 18: "Sometimes I feel so very alone in the world. It's so impossible to release my feelings."

With the death of his adoptive parents and his estrangement from Lois Lane (never a very satisfactory relationship anyway), *Superman* is left with no one he can be intimate with. Neither *Batman* nor the rest of his *JLA* friends can fill this void. They have their own problems and lives to attend to. *Superman* has come to realize this. Who, then, can fill this space? There is no more obvious choice than Lana Lang.

Lana cares for both *Superman* and Clark for who he is. She is possibly one of the few people who can see both sides of this dual personality and understand how each influences the other. Given the opportunity, Lana could be the most supportive person to Clark/*Superman*'s life. Give her that chance.

I would have bought *ACTION* #556 even if it contained only pages 18 and 19. Page 19 has possibly one of the most touching scenes I've read in a comic. *Bravo!*

JOHN A. LEACH
PO Box 284
[illegible] BC Canada
V0P 1X0

Out of room till next issue. Be with us for another pair of Superman adventures.
Till then, "look, up in the sky..."—

Bob Rozakis

AMBUSH BUG

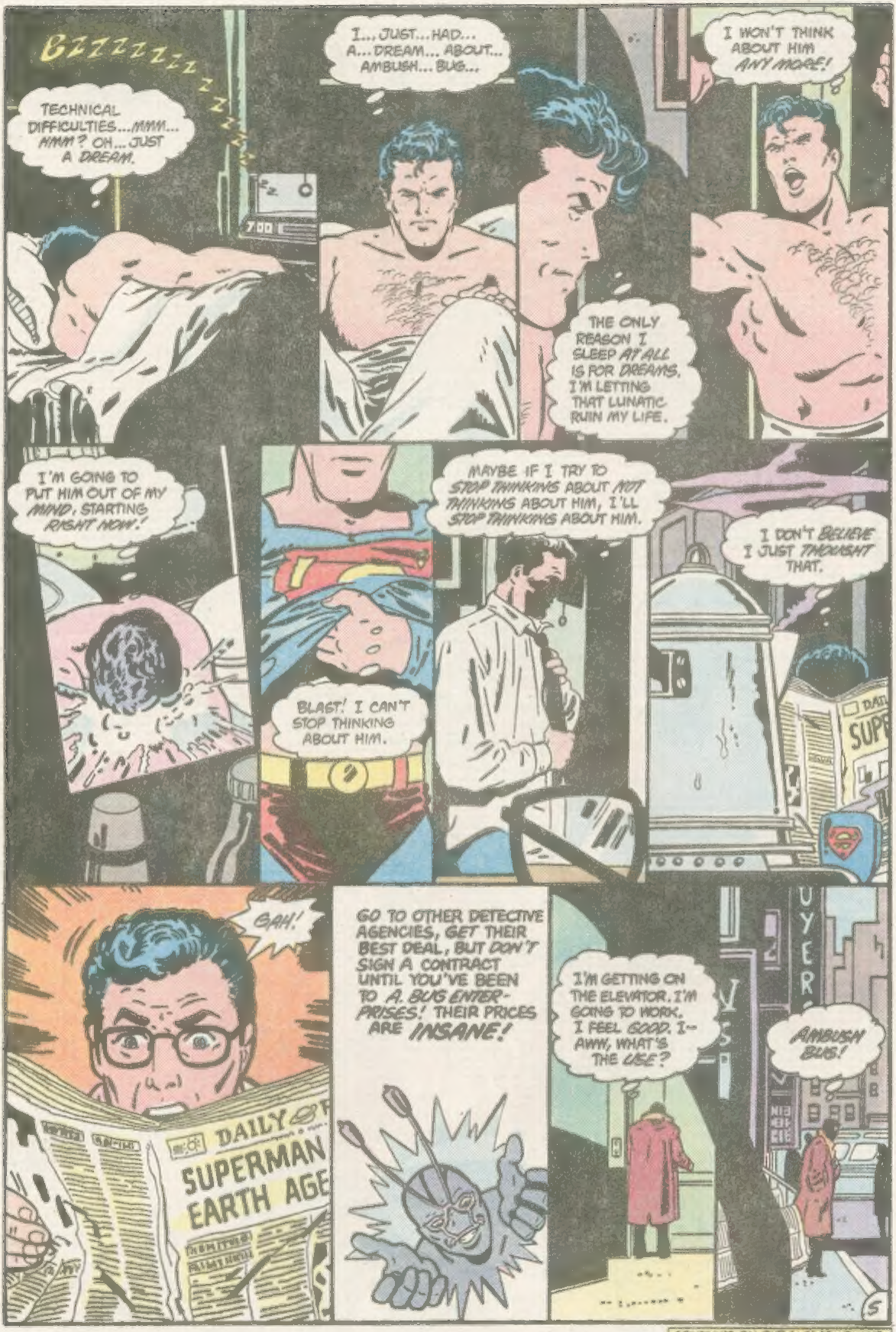
THOUGHT FOR THE DAY: MAYBE I'M CRAZY BUT I DON'T SEE ANYONE ELSE AROUND HERE WHO DOES!
ENTERPRIS
SUPER-H
OUR SP
MY FIRST ALIEN! THANKS RAO!

CREATED BY
Keith Giffen

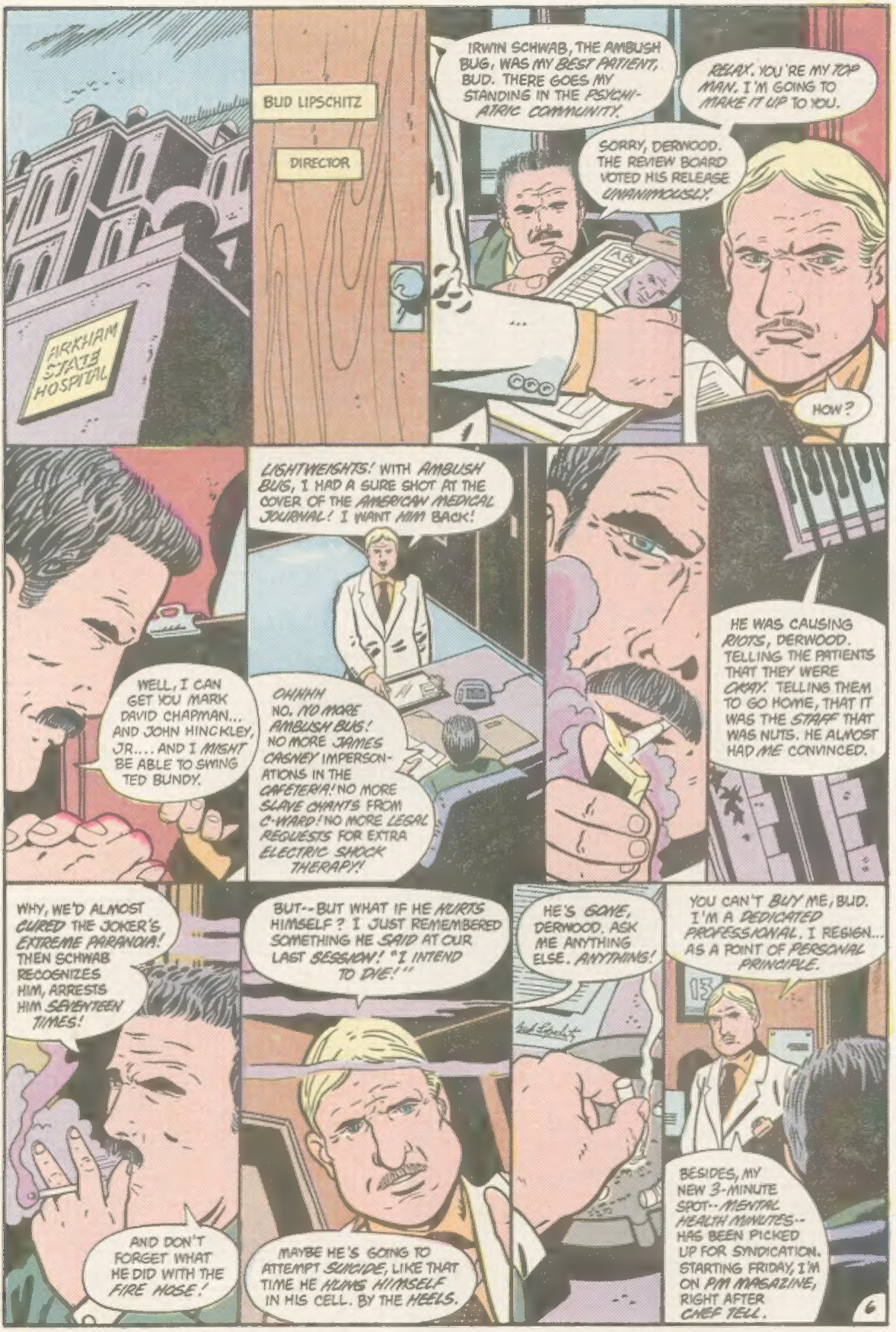
HAVE A SEAT, SIR. ONE OF OUR COUNSELORS WILL BE WITH YOU IN A MOMENT.
ACTUALLY, IF YOU'RE AMBUSH BUG, I'M HERE TO SEE YOU!!
OKAY... TALK, FOUR-EYES! WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH MY RECEPTIONIST?
WELL-UH-MY NAME IS CLARK KENT AND I'VE COME HERE TO INTERVIEW YOU FOR--
HOLD IT! FORGOT THE FEET ON THE DESK!
BETTER!
NOW LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT, KENT. YOU WANT ME TO TAIL YOUR WIFE AND FIND OUT WHERE SHE'S GETTING ALL THAT EXTRA GROCERY MONEY
GIVE ME STRENGTH!
WAIT A MINUTE! I THINK I KNOW THAT PECKISH PROFILE.
ISN'T THAT JEAN CLAUDE SUPEY BEHIND THOSE FOSTER GRANTS?
I-I-I-I WHY YOU'RE NOT THE FIRST PERSON TO... COMMENT... ON THE RESEMBLANCE.
IF YOU'RE NOT SUPERMAN, HOW COME YOUR SKIN'S SO CLEAR?
WELL.. AS AN ANCHORMAN.. IN THE PUBLIC EYE.. I DAB A LITTLE CLEARASIL ON TROUBLE SPOTS..
HOW COME YOUR GLASSES DON'T MELT WHEN YOU USE YOUR HEAT VISION?
GEE, LOOK AT THE TIME! THIS HAS BEEN FUN. WE'LL HAVE TO DO IT AGAIN REAL SOON. I'LL CALL YOU, RIGHT?
2

HE'S NOT GONNA CALL ME I DON'T HAVE A TELEPHONE
SCHWUUUPP
HEY, KENT! YOU'VE GOT YOUR BIB ON BACKWARDS!
I-UH-I'M ON MY WAY TO A PARTY. A COSTUME PARTY
HMMM. SHOULD I BELIEVE YOU OR NOT?
I BELIEVE YOU
I BELIEVE YOU NOT.
I BELIEVE YOU
I BELIEVE YOU NOT.
SLIP
SLUZZY
SWISH
YOU MEAN TO TELL ME--HAHAHA--THAT THERE ARE ACTUALLY PEOPLE--HOHOHOHO--WHO--GASPGASP--FALL FOR THAT STUPID DISGUISE?
SUPES, I'M GOING TO PUT ASIDE ALL OF MY QUALMS AND TAKE YOU INTO THE FIRM AS A FULL PARTNER!
BUT YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO KEEP YOUR CLOTHES PICKED UP!
WHOOSH
SUPEY?
WOW! I JUST HIRED HIM AND HE'S ALREADY OFF ON A CASE! WHAT A BROWN-NOSER!
HEY! GET BACK HERE!! I NEED YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER!!
3

HIS NAME IS IRWIN SCHWAB. HE WAS RAISED BY AN ADMIRAL SOLID-STATE TELEVISION.
METROPOLIS LIBRARY
REAL LIFE, IRWIN, REALIZES IS VERY MUCH LIKE THE ABC MOVIE OF THE WEEK.
LUCKY BUG
NO LONGER WILL HE BE PUNY, APATHETIC IRWIN SCHWAB, BUT INSTEAD, LIVE FROM METROPOLIS, HEEEEERE'S...
AMBUSH BUG!
PLEASE STAND BY
WE ARE EXPERIENCING TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES


BZZZZZZZZZZZ
TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES....MMM... HMM? OH... JUST A DREAM.
I... JUST... HAD... A... DREAM... ABOUT... AMBUSH... BUG...
I WON'T THINK ABOUT HIM ANY MORE!
THE ONLY REASON I SLEEP AT ALL IS FOR DREAMS. I'M LETTING THAT LUNATIC RUIN MY LIFE.
I'M GOING TO PUT HIM OUT OF MY MIND, STARTING RIGHT NOW!
BLAST! I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT HIM.
MAYBE IF I TRY TO STOP THINKING ABOUT NOT THINKING ABOUT HIM, I'LL STOP THINKING ABOUT HIM.
I DON'T BELIEVE I JUST THOUGHT THAT.
GAH!
DAILY
SUPERMAN
EARTH AGE
GO TO OTHER DETECTIVE AGENCIES, GET THEIR BEST DEAL, BUT DON'T SIGN A CONTRACT UNTIL YOU'VE BEEN TO A. BUG ENTERPRISES! THEIR PRICES ARE INSANE!
I'M GETTING ON THE ELEVATOR. I'M GOING TO WORK. I FEEL GOOD. I-- AWW, WHAT'S THE USE?
AMBUSH BUG!
5

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING


ARKHAM STATE HOSPITAL
BUD LIPSCHITZ
DIRECTOR
IRWIN SCHWAB, THE AMBUSH BUG, WAS MY BEST PATIENT, BUD. THERE GOES MY STANDING IN THE PSYCHIATRIC COMMUNITY.
SORRY, DERWOOD. THE REVIEW BOARD VOTED HIS RELEASE UNANIMOUSLY.
RELAX. YOU'RE MY TOP MAN. I'M GOING TO MAKE IT UP TO YOU.
HOW?
WELL, I CAN GET YOU MARK DAVID CHAPMAN... AND JOHN HINCKLEY, JR.... AND I MIGHT BE ABLE TO SWING TED BUNDY.
LIGHTWEIGHTS! WITH AMBUSH BUG, I HAD A SURE SHOT AT THE COVER OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL JOURNAL! I WANT HIM BACK!
OHHHH NO. NO MORE AMBUSH BUG! NO MORE JAMES CAGNEY IMPERSONATIONS IN THE CAFETERIA! NO MORE SLAVE CHANTS FROM C-WARD! NO MORE LEGAL REQUESTS FOR EXTRA ELECTRIC SHOCK THERAPY!
HE WAS CAUSING RIOTS, DERWOOD. TELLING THE PATIENTS THAT THEY WERE OKAY. TELLING THEM TO GO HOME, THAT IT WAS THE STAFF THAT WAS NUTS. HE ALMOST HAD ME CONVINCED.
WHY, WE'D ALMOST CURED THE JOKER'S EXTREME PARANOIA! THEN SCHWAB RECOGNIZES HIM, ARRESTS HIM SEVENTEEN TIMES!
AND DON'T FORGET WHAT HE DID WITH THE FIRE HOSE!
BUT--BUT WHAT IF HE HURTS HIMSELF? I JUST REMEMBERED SOMETHING HE SAID AT OUR LAST SESSION! "I INTEND TO DIE!"
MAYBE HE'S GOING TO ATTEMPT SUICIDE, LIKE THAT TIME HE HUMS HIMSELF IN HIS CELL. BY THE HEELS.
HE'S GONE, DERWOOD. ASK ME ANYTHING ELSE. ANYTHING!
YOU CAN'T BUY ME, BUD. I'M A DEDICATED PROFESSIONAL. I RESIGN... AS A POINT OF PERSONAL PRINCIPLE.
BESIDES, MY NEW 3-MINUTE SPOT--MENTAL HEALTH MINUTES--HAS BEEN PICKED UP FOR SYNDICATION. STARTING FRIDAY, I'M ON P/M MAGAZINE, RIGHT AFTER CHEF TELL.

AND NOW IT'S TIME FOR THE AMBUSH BUG HOUR, STARRING AMBUSH BUG AS AMBUSH--
POP
CLICK
VIOLATION
OY! A LAWBREAKER! BETTER BE CAREFUL... HE LOOKS LIKE HE MAY TRY SOMETHING.
GO AHEAD. MAKE MY DAY.
YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT. ANYTHING YOU SAY MAY BE USED AGAINST YOU IN A COURT OF LAW.
PING!
POLICE
OUCH! WISH THE MISSUS HADN'T FORGOTTEN MY CLEARASIL. THIS ONE ON THE SIDE OF MY NOSE IS--
THUMP
SGT.
JEHOSHAPHAT!
ANOTHER BUICK BROUGHT TO JUSTICE! LOVE FOREVER AMBUSH BUG
WHAT SORT OF ANIMAL WOULD DO A THING LIKE THIS?
CLUE
WHOOP WHOOP WHOOP

--WAS GREETED BY P.L.O. LEADER YASIR AMBUSH BUG. I DID IT AGAIN.
POP!
INTRODUCING... THE AMAZING GINSU!!
A TYPEWRITER MAY BE THE TOOL OF YOUR TRADE, KENT, BUT THREE YEARS LATER YOU STILL CAN'T COOK A CHICKEN ON IT!
BUG, YOU'RE GOING TO KILL YOURSELF WITH THAT SWORD IF YOU'RE NOT CAREFUL!
BUT I INTEND TO DIE! THAT'S WHY I CAN DO ANYTHING!!
SO HOW DO YOU LIKE MY NEW DEVIL-MAY-CARE ATTITUDE?
IT'S BEEN DONE... TO DEATH.
YOU DON'T CATCH MY DRIFT, SUPES.
I HAVE PLEDGED A SACRED VOW TO COMMIT HARA-KIRI AT THE END OF MY SIXTH EPISODE.
I'M TELLING YOU, THAT'S OLD HAT.
NOW IF YOU WERE TO DO IT AT THE END OF YOUR FIRST EPISODE...
SORRY, SUPES, BUT IT'S NOT IN THE CARDS.
WHY NOT?
YOU REALLY THINK IF I WAS GONNA SLICE MY BOD OPEN, GIFFEN WOULD HIDE ME BEHIND THIS DOOR?

POLICE BLOTTER

KEITH GIFFEN FOR WILLFUL AND MALICIOUS PLOTTING AND INVOLUNTARY PENCILLING.

ROBERT LOREN FLEMING FOR BALLOONING WITHOUT A LICENSE.

BOB OKSNER FOR INKING WHILE INSPIRING TO RIOT.

ANTHONY TOLLIN FOR COLORING IN A PUBLIC PLACE.

JOHN COSTANZA FOR LETTERING, LOITERING, AND LITTERING.

JULIUS SCHWARTZ FOR GROSS NEGLIGENCE.

FINIS